

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 140

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, UR

SUBJECT: CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR DEATH OF RUDOLF HESS

REF: BONN 1167

1. WE APPRECIATE PROGRESS EMBASSIES HAVE MADE ON THIS SUBJECT AND GENERALLY WELCOME REVISIONS PROPOSED IN SCENARIO WORKED OUT BY MISSIONS. USE OF GOVERNORS' CHANNEL FOR APPROACH, HOWEVER, MAY RAISE PROBLEM BECAUSE OF PERSONALITY OF PRESENT SOVIET ACTING GOVERNOR.

2. WE RECOGNIZE CERTAIN TACTICAL LOGIC IN MAKING APPROACH AT GOVERNORS LEVEL ALTHOUGH AS GENERAL MATTER SOVIET EMBASSY SEEMS TO TAKE SOMEWHAT MORE POSITIVE APPROACH THAN POTSDAM MILITARY TO WHICH SOVIET GOVERNOR IS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE. REASONABLE, PRAGMATIC MAJOR DEYEV, WHO AS SOVIET GOVERNOR FOR LAST YEAR HAS AVOIDED PETTY FRICTIONS WHICH FORMERLY PLAGUED PRISON OPERATION, HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN ILL, APPARENTLY WITH PNEUMONIA RELAPSE, SINCE BEFORE CHRISTMAS. WE ARE TOLD THAT HE WILL PROBABLY NOT RETURN TO JOB. HIS CHIEF WARDER AND ACTING GOVERNOR, YOUNG CIVILIAN NAMED FEDOROV, STRIKES ALL WHO DEAL WITH HIM
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AS RIGID, UNIMAGINATIVE, HARD-LINER LACKING IN SELF-

ASSURANCE AND INCLINED TO MOST LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF PRISON REGULATIONS. MOST RECENT AND TYPICAL EXAMPLE WAS INSISTENCE TWO WEEKS AGO ON CENSORING PASSAGE IN PRISONER'S WEEKLY LETTER THANKING WIFE FOR SENDING SOCKS OF BETTER QUALITY THAN THOSE PROVIDED BY PRISON AND FOR HELPING TO BANISH MELANCHOLIA OF LONELY CHRISTMAS BY SMALL GIFTS. THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS THAT FEDOROV EXPECTS TO BE ACTING GOVERNOR FOR CONSIDERABLE TIME OR PERHAPS EVEN TO BE CONFIRMED IN POSITION.

3. WE WOULD FEAR THAT IF APPROACH WERE MADE TO HIM, FEDOROV WOULD REACT NOT BY TRYING TO FIND PRACTICAL SOLUTION BUT BY ATTEMPTING TO GAIN BROWNIES POINTS FROM SOVIET MILITARY BY IDENTIFYING ALLIED TRICKS. PROVIDED THERE WERE NO CENTRAL SOVIET POLICY OBJECTIONS WHICH WOULD TRANSCEND MILITARY-EMBASSY LINES, SOVIET EMBASSY WOULD BE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO AGREE TO ALLIED PROPOSALS WITHOUT SUBMITTING THEM TO MONTHS OF HAGGLING THAT COULD LEAVE BASIC ISSUE CLOUDED. WE WOULD SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT EMBASSIES MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER BUILDING FLEXIBILITY INTO SCENARIO, PERMITTING MISSIONS TO UTILIZE POLAD CHANNEL FOR INITIAL APPROACH IF FEDOROV CONTINUES TO HOLD DOWN SOVIET CHAIR AT PRISION. GEORGE

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